

**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2016– 6:30 P.M.**

Members	Attendance	April 2015- APRIL 2016	
		Present	Absent
Edna Elijah, Chair	P	6	0
Austin Scott, Vice, Chair	A	3	3
Gregory T. Boardman	A	3	3
Towana Bonaparte	P	5	1
Dr. Ciara L. Bostick	P	4	2
Maureen S. Dinnen	P	3	3
Jennifer Gordon	A	3	0
Rochelle Horowitz	P	4	2
Deniece Jones	P	5	1
Jennifer L. Kimmey	P	5	1
Sam L. Mitchell	A	3	2
Dr. Maureen Persi	P	4	2
Jonathan Schwartz	P	4	1
Betty Shelley	A	3	1
M. Elaine Wilson	A	3	3
Lauren Wood	P	2	0

**Appointed Members to the Board: 16
Needed to constitute a quorum: 9**

Staff

Junia Robinson, staff liaison
Charles Webster, BCPS liaison
Betty Shelley, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Association

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – Chair, Edna Elijah**
- II. Attendance by Roll Call – Chair, Edna Elijah**

Determination of quorum

As of this date, February 18, 2016, there are 16 appointed members to the board, which means 9 would constitute a quorum. At this time, there is a quorum.

III. **Approve minutes** (January 21st, 2016)

Motion by Mr. Jonathan Schwartz seconded by Ms. Jennifer Kimmey, that the said minutes for January 21st, 2016 be approved. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Guest Introduction/Presentation:** Marie M. Valbrun-Pope, Executive Director, Student Support Initiatives, **Broward County Public Schools (BCPS),** The Promise Program

Mrs. Pope began her presentation by thanking the Board for their interest in “one of our signature programs with national recognition from the White House and other organizations, who are really looking at what we are doing in Broward to replicate as well as other Districts across the nation”.

Mrs. Pope explained “Student Support Initiatives (SSI) is the division in BCPS that deals with the learning support pieces. So if you think about the District in two buckets, you have all these academic pieces and it’s our entire curriculum and all the departments that deal with reading, writing, math, social studies and all the other curriculum pieces. The Student Support Initiatives is the bucket that deals with all the behavior and emotional pieces. We provide all the Social workers in the schools, all the health and nursing programs in the schools, we provide for economically disadvantage students through Title I as well as behavior intervention programs”. Mrs. Pope also shared that the SSI division also works on diversity pieces as well. She said that they are known as the “cradle to all our students in the District”.

“What is Promise”, Mrs. Pope explained that Promise is an intervention program designed to address unique needs of students from kindergarten to the 12th grade who have committed specific acts of misconduct that might normally lead to a juvenile delinquency arrest. From that point students, will either enter in the Juvenile Justice system as the likely path for those types of infractions. In addition, the program serve students who have created infractions related to bullying or harassment. Mrs. Pope said “we had a huge issue with students in the District being bullied and a related piece is harassment”. She said the School Board said that the program really needs to include those two pieces even though they may not necessarily lead to arrest.

Mrs. Pope said “in 2011/12 the State of Florida put out a report and the report spoke to school related arrest across the State and ranked all of the counties in terms of school related arrest”. She continued by saying “school related arrest are either generated while a student is within the school day by an Administrator, School Resource Officer, Teacher or a school related arrest can also be generated outside of school and is flagged as school related by the Law enforcement personal who’s arresting the student”.

In 2011/12, BCPS had the highest school related arrest than any other county in the State of Florida. Mrs. Pope said “that was a huge catalyst for us to

intervene in a big way". There were discussions with the District and various other community organizations including the NAACP and some groups talking about it; however when the report was released, the Superintendent and community members said they must do something about it.

She explained the discussion began with community activism with the NAACP, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and a few others within a small group met with the previous BCPS Superintendent to inquire about past initiatives for juvenile arrests. These conversations which included Board members went on for over two years which included some disconnect with internal and external data. Mrs. Pope said they learned through these meetings that data was being sent to the State from DJJ, the local Police and BCPS all three agencies reporting on school related arrests. Under Mr. Runcie's administration, she said the Superintendent agreed that the District will "own the data and address it as a community".

Mrs. Pope said the "small community group became a large group and engaged the State Attorney's Office (SAO), Teachers Union, Administrators Union the Public Defender's Office (PD) all the Parent affiliate groups as well as DJJ and NAACP who were already at the "table". She shared during the time of this conversation, the State and Federal government were talking about "the school to prison pipeline".

Mrs. Pope said that "we went through a complete revision of our student code of conduct or what we call our discipline metrics, which lets our school leaders know how to handle certain infractions". She said this allowed the group to look at "what we were arresting are kids for". Mrs. Pope continued by saying "we were arresting our kids for the majority of thirteen offenses in our schools which included fighting". For twenty years, we've gotten to where our policies have harsher and harsher punishments for everyday behaviors in our schools. The belief was that if we punish our students harshly our schools would be safer, we would have fewer fights and better learning environments and everyone would be happy". "Well, twenty years of research since the inception of zero tolerance and we have hard evidence that has truly harmed our kids nor has it made our environments safer in fact, it has made our environment more strict and less climates of positives cultures". Mrs. Pope said the nation is now back peddling on the zero tolerance pieces. She said BCPS went through a complete revision of their policies to remove those instances where early on we say engage law enforcement that was only for non-violent misdemeanors mainly fights in the schools. She continued by saying "we started with revising the policies because we really wanted to change the practices". A lot of communication was needed, according to Mrs. Pope both internally in the system and externally to include "our customers, the students and their families, all of the organizations who work with children in Broward county needed to know as well". A lot of communication regarding this new Promise program was shared countywide and BCPS received a lot of speaking request from groups who wanted to know more about the program.

Mrs. Pope shared in 2015 "this past year, we went from being at the top of the list to the seventh from the bottom for school related arrests.

Mrs. Horowitz asked “I noticed that you mentioned restorative justice, can you explain how that works”? Mrs. Pope responded by saying “as we were building this program and talking about what we needed to do to make it a comprehensive program, we realized as some of our kids were going back from The Promise program back to their regular school that their level of success was rested on reconciliation with some folks they had some issues with. For instance, if I stole your cell phone and I went to Promise for theft and successfully completed the program but I still have people who are angry with me like Teachers, Administrators and other kids, a reconciliation piece is set up on the back end where there’s a meeting set-up with the victim and student where sometimes it’s a Teacher or Adult and the Student must make things right”.

Ms. Dinnen said “I was in on this at the beginning and it’s wonderful to see this blossom and I want to give you and the school District a lot of credit, it’s very successful thus far and I hope it continues to be that way”.

Mrs. Pope said the work could not have been successful without the input from the community. She continued by saying “I know several members of this Board including Chair Elijah who has been very verbal about this matter”.

V. Current business

A. Charles Webster – Broward County Public Schools

Mr. Webster updated the Board on the Coalition of Advisory Board meeting that took place on January 06th, he said it was a very good meeting and he is working on scheduling another Coalition meeting soon. The Superintendent as well as School Board member Mrs. Murray were in attendance and had some good comments and conversations.

Mr. Webster announced the Parent Engagement conference scheduled for Saturday, March 05th at Piper High School.

B. City Staff update – Junia Robinson

Junia Robinson, staff liaison began her updates by announcing that Mrs. Angela Brown from Dillard elementary school will be the guest speaker for the next Board meeting scheduled for March 17th. Junia also said that a representative from BCPS will be in attendance to give a presentation about the recent release of school grades. She thanked EAB members who attended Neighbor Support Night saying the event was very successful.

C. Board discussions/member updates

Ms. Dinnen reported that she was able to speak during the Commission workshop regarding the communication to the City Commission. She said she the Mayor and all the Commissioners supported the communication.

Ms. Denise Jones said “I would like to acknowledge Dr. Ciara Bostick who is a former student of mine when I was teaching at Dillard high school, she is a new author of a book called “Welcome to Womanhood: A pre-teen survival guide”

VI. Communication to City Commission

VII. New/Future Business

Chair Elijah reminded the Members about goals for the Board for this year. She asked if anyone remembered and had any goals to discuss. Chair Elijah encouraged Board Members to work on goals and bring them to the next meeting.

Next Meeting and Closing

The next meeting is scheduled for, Thursday, March 17, 2016

City hall, 8th floor conference room